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What Arizona has Been Doing to Tackle Gun Violence Since the 2011 Tucson Shooting

***Nearly \$17.5 Million in Federal and State Funding Directed Towards Ensuring Accurate & Complete
Criminal History Database/Keeping Guns Out of the Hands of Individuals with Mental Health
Adjudications***

Phoenix, AZ, Thursday, January 12, 2023—This year marks the 12th anniversary that Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords was critically injured by a rampant gunman in Tucson. On January 8, 2011, a horrific act of gun violence impacted Tucson, Arizona, when a gunman with known mental health and substance abuse issues opened fire at a public event held by U.S. Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, killing six people and injuring 14 others. As a result of this tragic event, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) formally established a NICS (National Instant Criminal Background Check System) Task Force.

NICS is a national computerized system that checks available records on persons who may be disqualified from receiving firearms. It is used by all firearms licensees to instantly determine whether a prospective buyer is disqualified from receiving firearms due to a criminal record or other lawful reasons.

Members of the NICS Task Force include over 400 representatives from over 100 of Arizona's local, county, state and federal criminal justice agencies, along with non-governmental organizations, such as domestic violence advocacy groups, and academia. The goal of the NICS Task Force is to develop solutions for ensuring accurate and complete information is reported by Arizona into the National Instant Criminal Background Check system (NICS).

2022 marked the 10th anniversary of the NICS Task Force. The Task Force acknowledged this anniversary at a strategic planning retreat where they reflected on the successes they have had and identified opportunities to drive improvements.

Since 2011, ACJC has successfully been awarded nearly \$17.5 million in federal grant funds and state general fund dollars to support the improvement of the quality and accessibility of all NICS-eligible records—including mental health adjudications. A few of the key state accomplishments include:

2022

- The number of served Orders of Protection has increased by over 40% since the system went live in 2020. Additionally, vast majority of orders of protection are served within 7 days (down from 23 days) AND over half are served within 48 hours of issuance from a judge.

Our mission is to continuously address, improve, sustain and enhance public safety in the State of Arizona through the coordination, cohesiveness, and effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System

- House Bill 2604 doubles the curation of served protective orders from one year to two years.

2020

- ACJC in partnership with the Administrative Office of the Courts launched the new and improved Arizona Protective Orders & Initiation Notification Tool (AZPOINT). The new online system significantly reduced the days an Order of Protection or Injunction Against Harassment is issued. The provides greater protections for victims.

2018

- Governor Ducey and the Arizona Legislature provided \$1.8 million to ACJC to complete a three-year project to create a direct feed from local and county prosecutors' offices into the Arizona Computerized Criminal History System (ACCH). This direct, real-time feed will help to ensure that the state's criminal history records are as accurate and complete as possible. As of January 2023, 60 percent of the county records are now being directly fed into the ACCH.

2017

- House Bill 2249: Overhauled and modernized Arizona's Order of Protection/Injunction Against Harassment system to give greater access to people seeking protection from the courts. The new system went live the first quarter of 2020.

2016

- House Bill 2154: Clarified fingerprinting protocols to ensure all adjudicated individuals have an accurate criminal history for their crime.
- Creation of Arizona Historical Warrant Repository to allow for a searchable state-wide database of warrants. The cumulative Active Warrant entries into the National Crime Information Center at the FBI has increased from 11,706 in 2013 to 375,798 as of June 2022.

2015

- Senate Bill 1373: Authorized notification of mental health adjudications to law enforcement.
- Senate Bill 1295: Required the courts to obtain appropriate fingerprints on defendants to create a criminal history prior to sentencing. The number of incoming inmates to the Department of Corrections with an accurate history for their crime decreased from 159 in 2015 to 0 in 2020.

2014

- House Bill 2322: Mandates reporting of all mental health adjudications to the NICS system. As a result, the cumulative total of Arizona mental health adjudications in the NICS system increased from 15,663 in 2013 to 52,377 as of December 2021.

"I am extremely proud of the significant accomplishments that our state has made in improving our criminal history records and putting into place protections that will keep guns out of the hands of individuals with mental health issues," said Andrew T. LeFevre, executive director of the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission. "We will continue to work with the Governor, Legislature, and stakeholders to improve public safety by identifying solutions that will close gaps in our criminal justice systems."

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